

SPAIN'S AENOR - MEDIO AMBIENTE

Introduction

The Medio-Ambiente ecolabeling program in Spain was developed in 1993 by the Spanish Association of Standardization and Certification (AENOR). AENOR, a privately-run organization, acts as the Competent Body for awarding the European Union ecolabel in Spain (as part of the EU scheme). AENOR is a member of the Global Ecolabeling Network (GEN) and participates in the development of the International Standards Organization (ISO) ecolabeling standards. The program is voluntary, and aims to promote the production of environmentally preferable products and to provide information about the environmental impacts of available products. To date, criteria have been set for three product categories: paints and varnishes, polyethylene bags for waste, and polyethylene bags for the supermarket. In total, 14 labels have been awarded for positive environmental attributes.

Recent Developments

Spain's ecolabeling program has changed little in its first three years of operation. Its rates of product category definition and award criteria development are, however, increasing. Product groups for which criteria development is very close to being completed include: paper products, solar plates for solar lighting, photocopy machines, and cleaning products for cars. Additionally, AENOR is working on criteria for vacuum cleaners, TVs, glass materials, tiles, and wood/metal transporting materials.

AENOR notes increased retailer interest. With the growing interest of retailers in Spain's ecolabel, this area could develop in the near future. Because the program is fairly new, however, associations with procurement programs, either formal or informal, have not been developed.

Program Summary

Product groups and criteria are suggested by manufacturers and consumers and are selected by AENOR based on market studies. They are then forwarded to the AENOR Environmental Certification Technical Committee. This committee is composed of members of interested parties, including manufacturer associations, consumer associations, ecological groups, test laboratories, and control and inspection bodies. The criteria are then developed and approved by the Committee. Criteria are reviewed every three years. AENOR reported that any interested party may participate throughout the entire process.

Once award criteria are established, applicants may submit an application to the AENOR environmental division. AENOR audits the applicant and sets up testing by an accredited laboratory (selected by the Spanish Accreditation Body). If the review is favorable, the application is passed on to the Environmental Certification Technical Committee. If there are no objections, the Committee approves the application and awards the label. All application information is kept

confidential until an award is given, when applicant information becomes public. The applicant is responsible for an initial fee of about \$700, which includes all testing and audit fees. Once awarded use of the label, the applicant then pays 0.1 percent of its annual sales to AENOR, as well as the fees for an annual compliance audit (the cost of this audit depends on the size of the producer's facilities).

Program Methodology

A life-cycle analysis is conducted for each potential product group, taking account of impacts from raw materials selection to product disposal.

Other Information

AENOR is sensitive to small and medium sized businesses, as reflected in its percentage-based fee system, which allows companies with smaller sales to incur smaller ecolabeling costs. In fact, the majority of products currently labeled in Spain are manufactured by small companies.

As mentioned above, AENOR is a member of ISO and GEN, and is the Competent Body for the EU. AENOR bases its criteria on ISO standards and is a participating member in continuing standard development. It believes that GEN is a very good organizing body, especially for increasing the role of mutual recognition in ecolabeling. With GEN offices in Sweden, Japan, and the US, AENOR feels that GEN has strength in an international forum. In an effort to increase coordination among programs, AENOR is participating in a study conducted by the Danish Environmental Protection Agency about European ecolabels.

According to AENOR, the organization has not encountered any trade issues or conflicts.

References

AENOR, *AENOR-Medio Ambiente Eco-Label*.

Tejera Oliver, Jose Luis, AENOR. Personal communication with Abt Associates. Summer 1997.

Product Categories

Final Categories

- Paints and varnishes
- Polyethylene bags for waste
- Polyethylene bags for supermarkets

Under Development

Paper products, including envelopes and folders
Solar plates for solar light
Photocopy machines
Cleaning products for cars
Vacuum cleaners
Televisions
Glass materials
Tiles
Wood/metal palates for transporting materials

